

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

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SUBJECT: TIMING OF MEETING OF WORLD FOOD COUNCIL RULES OF
PROCEDURE WORKING GROUP

REF: ROME 10162

1. LATE JULY 16, AS RESULT OF SEPARATE TALKS OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO FAO WITH WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SECRETARIAT AND WITH FAO CONFERENCE ARRANGMENTS UNIT, WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SECRETARIAT CHANGED PROPOSED MEETING TIME FOR WFC RULES OF PROCEDURE WORKING GROUP TO WEEK BEGINNING OCTOBER 27. THIS ELIMINATES CONFLICT WITH INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF WORLD FOOD PROGRAM OR FAO INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP ON GRAINS, BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 29 AND OCTOBER 6 RESPECTIVELY. TWO WEEKS BEGINNING OCTOBER 13 ARE TIME OF MEETING OF COMMITTEE ON COMMODITY PROBLEMS. IN WEEK OF OCTOBER 27, HOWEVER, ONLY ROME AGRICULTURE MEETING UNDER WAY WILL BE THAT OF FAO COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS. THIS NEW PROPOSAL OF OCTOBER 27 HAS BEEN CONVEYED BY WFC SECRETARIAT TO MEXICAN CHAIRMAN OF WORKING GROUP WHO IS NOW IN MEXICO, BEFORE HE HAD RESPONDED TO
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EARLIER PROPOSALS OF SEPTEMBER 29 OR OCTOBER 6.

2. GENEVA GROUP MEETING ON JULY 17 CONSIDERED OCTOBER 27 DATE ACCEPTABLE, AND HIGHLY PREFERABLE TO EARLIER DATES PROPOSED, SINCE IT ELIMINATED CONFLICT OF MEETINGS THAT WOULD BE AWKWARD FOR MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND ALLOWS MORE TIME FOR INTRA AND INTER GROUP CONSULTATION. ITALIAN REPRESENTATIVE, WHO IS CHAIRMAN OF FAO COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS, SAID COINCIDENCE OF HIS COMMITTEE MEETING WITH WORKING GROUP SHOULD POSE NO PROBLEMS.

3. U.S. CO-CHAIRMAN OF GENEVA GROUP REPORTED THAT WFC SECRETARIAT IS NOT IN POSITION TO ESTABLISH FIRM DATE FOR PROCEDURES WORKING GROUP MEETING, NOR DEADLINE FOR GOVERNMENT SUBMISSIONS OF VIEWS ON RULES OF PROCEDURE UNTIL AFTER ECOSOC HAS REACTED NEXT WEEK TO WORLD FOOD COUNCIL SESSION. WFC SECRETARIAT EXPECTS TO SET DEADLINE OF SEPTEMBER 15 FOR SUBMISSION OF GOVERNMENTS' VIEWS.

4. GENEVA GROUP AGREED THAT CONSULTATION AMONG GENEVA GROUP GOVERNMENTS IS NEEDED BEFORE SUBMISSION OF GOVERNMENTS' VIEWS. ALTHOUGH GENEVA GROUP IN ROME SHOULD BE INVOLVED AND CAN MAKE SUGGESTIONS WITH RESPECT TO TACTICS, PROBLEMS ARE IN MAJOR PART LEGAL AND TECHNICAL. RECOMMENDATION: U.S. CO-CHAIRMAN SAID HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT U.S. GOVERNMENT TRANSMIT SUMMARY OF ITS VIEWS TO OTHER GOVERNMENTS FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION BEFORE SEPTEMBER 15 SUBMISSION.

5. AUSTRALIAN, WHO HAD PARTICIPATED IN WORKING GROUP DURING WFC SESSION, NOTED THAT DEVELOPED COUNTRIES' POSITION HAD BECOME LESS RIGID IN WFC SESSION, THAT GROUP-77 HAD NOT SET FORTH ANY AGREED EXPLICIT DEFINITION OF ROLE OF WFC PRESIDENT, AND THAT USSR AND SOME G-77 MEMBERS SUPPORTED PRIMACY OF UNITED NATIONS ITSELF AS OPPOSED TO WFC PRESIDENT. SOME POSSIBLE ROOM FOR MANEUVER WAS SEEN IN PRECEDENT OF SUBSTANTIAL ROLE OF INDEPENDENT CHAIRMAN OF FAO COUNCIL, WHICH SEEMS TO BE BASED IN LARGE PART ON PRACTICE AND PERSONALITY RATHER THAN PROCEDURAL REGULATIONS. IT WAS FEARED THAT IF WE HOLD TO RIGID VIEW, WE RUN RISK OF BEING VOTED DOWN, BUT IF WE TAKE PRAGMATIC APPROACH OF RECOGNIZING THAT MAREI IS GOING TO PLAY MAJOR ROLE IN PLANNING AND ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN SESSIONS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNCIL, AND SO INDICATE TO GROUP-77 IN INFORMAL CONTACTS BEFOREHAND, WE MAY BE ABLE TO AVOID WRITING OUT DAMAGING LEGAL PRECEDENTS.

6. THE ROLE OF ANDRE SURENA OF DEPARTMENT OF STATE'S OFFICE OF LEGAL ADVISOR, WHICH WAS COMPLIMENTED DURING WFC SESSION BY FAO STAFF LAWYER DELEGATED TO SERVICE WORKING GROUP, WAS ALSO APPRECIATED BY GENEVA GROUP. RECOMMENDATION: THAT SUR-

ENA BE INCLUDED IN THE U.S. DELEGATION AND IF POSSIBLE COME
TO ROME SOME DAYS AHEAD OF WORKING GROUP MEETING TO ENGAGE IN
CONTACT MEETINGS. VOLPE

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